

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PRAGUE 00900 230801Z

43

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07

L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

SAM-01 /068 W

----- 002633

R 221445Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7941

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

USMISSION GENEVA

AMCONSUL MUNICH

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRAGUE 0900

GENEVA FOR AMBASSADOR SHERER

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, CZ (DUBCEK, ALEXANDER)

SUBJECT: KSC CONTINUES ATTACKS AGAINST DUBCEK

REF: PRAGUE 855

1. SUMMARY: THE HARSH CAMPAIGN AGAINST DUBCEK AND THE OTHER MEN OF 1968, LAUNCHED BY HUSAK ON APRIL 16, HAS CONTINUED FULL BLAST. THE CSSR INTERIOR MINISTER SPOKE TO IT ON APRIL 17, RUDE PRAVO HAD A STRONG EDITORIAL ON APRIL 19, AND VASIL BILAK CHIMED IN ON APRIL 21. THE CENTRAL COMMIT-  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PRAGUE 00900 230801Z

TEE WILL MEET THIS WEEK. AS BEST THE EMBASSY CAN JUDGE,

THERE ARE NO SIGNS OF PUBLIC DISQUIET, ALTHOUGH THERE IS CERTAINLY CONCERN IN SOME CIRCLES ABOUT A TIGHTENING OF THE LINE. WE FEEL IT IS TOO EARLY TO JUDGE ABOUT WHAT ALL OF THIS MEANS FOR HUSAK'S POSITION. HE IS STILL IN COMMAND AT PRESENT, ALTHOUGH HE CERTAINLY SEEMS TO HAVE DAMAGED WHATEVER IMAGE HE HAS BUILT AS THE WOULD-BE STATESMAN WHO NORMALIZED CZECHOSLOVAKIA AFTER 1968. END SUMMARY.

2. THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST DUBCEK LAUNCHED BY HUSAK ON APRIL 16 HAS CONTINUED FULL BLAST. ON APRIL 18 HUSAK WAS GIVEN EXTRA-ORDINARY COVERAGE IN RUDE PRAVO WITH A LONG AND FULL REPRINT OF AN ARTICLE HE DID FOR PROBLEMS OF PEACE AND COMMUNISM. THIS WAS COMBINED WITH EXCERPTS FROM AN APRIL 17 SPEECH BY CSSR INTERIOR MINISTER JAROMIR OBZINA, WHO ISSUED A STRONG WARNING THAT "ANY ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES OF DOMESTIC REACTIONARY GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS OR OF IMPERIALIST INTELLIGENCE" WOULD BE "WIPE OUT IN TIME." (HARKING BACK TO THE SLANSKY TRIALS PERIOD, OBZINA DID ADD, "WE CANNOT AND MUST NOT APPLY . . . THE METHODS OF 'DOG EAT DOG' OR OF THE 'TRANSIENT PERIOD' OF CAPITALISM TO SOCIALISM, BUT NEW, PROVEN METHODS.")

3. ON APRIL 19 RUDE PRAVO HAD A VIRULENT UNSIGNED EDITORIAL CONTINUING THE ATTACK. IT SPECIFICALLY ATTACKED DUBCEK, SMRKOVSKY, KRIEGEL, MYLNAR, PELIKAN, AND SIK, AND IT ACCUSED THEM OF BEING "OPEN TRAITORS, OPEN ENEMIES OF THIS PEOPLE, THIS SYSTEM, THIS REGIME." (THE ARTICLE DID RESTATE THE PARTY'S "INDIVIDUAL AND DIFFERENTIATED" APPROACH TOWARDS REINTEGRATION OF THOSE WHO IN 1968 WERE "MISGUIDED OR LED ASTRAY," BUT THE ATTITUDE TOWARDS DUBCEK AND THOSE LIKE HIM WAS EXPRESSED IN ACID.)

4. ON APRIL 21, THE MOST NOTORIOUS OF THE HARD-LINERS, VASIL BILAK, CHIMED IN WITH A SPEECH MARKING LENIN'S 105TH BIRTHDAY (RUDE PRAVO APRIL 22) IN WHICH HE IN TURN EXCORIATED DUBCEK AND THE OTHERS. OMINOUSLY, BILAK SAID: "MANY OF THOSE WHO BEAR FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR ORIGINATING THE COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY SITUATION ARE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE MAGNANIMITY OF THE CURRENT PARTY LEADERSHIP AND RELYING ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT WORKING PEOPLE HAVE FORGOTTEN THEIR DISRUPTIVE ACTIVITIES." (INTERESTINGLY, BILAK WAS IN SYRIA AT THE

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PRAGUE 00900 230801Z

TIME OF HUSAK'S SPEECH, DURING A VISIT WHICH HAD BEEN EARLIER POSTPONED, ACCORDING TO REPORTS.)

5. AS REPORTED IN PRAGUE 861, THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE WILL CONVENE THIS WEEK (PROBABLY) AND PERHAPS SOME NEWS WILL SOON SURFACE ABOUT WHAT THESE ATTACKS MEAN. OBVIOUSLY PRAGUE IS FILLED WITH SPECULATION AND RUMORS RIGHT NOW. KNOWLEDGEABLE OBSERVERS HAVE BEEN TALKING FOR SOME TIME ABOUT THE ONGOING

DEBATE CONCERNING THE PARTY'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE MEN OF 1968, BUT NO ONE KNEW WHICH WAY THE DEBATE WAS GOING. MOST PEOPLE NOW ASSUME THAT HUSAK'S OUTBURST HAD ITS ROOTS IN SHARP DEBATE THAT WAS GOING ON LAST FALL, NECESSITATING TWO SLOVAK PARTY PLENUMS AND RESULTING IN THE PAUCITY OF PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS AT THE NOVEMBER KSC PLENUM. THEY ASSUME THAT HUSAK'S VISIT TO MOSCOW IN MARCH WAS ALSO LINKED TO THIS DEBATE. THERE HAVE BEEN RUMORS THAT SOVIETS GTWIN#WITH

DUBCEK HAS CONTINUED, PRESUMABLE IN AN EFFORT TO GET HIM TO RECENT, AND SOME DIPLOMATS HAVE HEARD THAT DUBCEK WAS TAKEN LJBMSR#BEFORE TALKS. WHETHER THESE RUMORS WERE TRUE OR NOT, DUBCEK SEEMS TO HAVE STOOD FIRM, AND THE EMERGENCE OF HIS LETTER IN OCTOBER (IF IT INDEED FIRST EMERGED THEN) PRESUMABLY PLAYED A LARGE ROLE IN THE DEBATES AT THE CC PLENUMS.

6. WE WOULD NOT WISH TO INDULGE IN SPECULATION BEFORE THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING, BUT THREE AREAS MIGHT BE IDENTIFIED WHERE MUCH DISCUSSION IS NOW GOING ON AMONGST DIPLOMATS AND JOURNALISTS HERE. FIRST, AS TO DUBCEK HIMSELF, A FEW PEOPLE STILL SEEM TO THINK HE REPRESENTS A LIVING FORCE IN THE COUNTRY. WE CANNOT SEE THIS. HE IS A SYMBOL -- AND ESPECIALLY TO PEOPLE OUTSIDE, LIKE MR. PALME -- BUT NOT A LIVING FORCE, TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE. WHAT TO DO ABOUT DUBCEK IS REALLY A QUESTION OF WHAT TO DO ABOUT THE MEMORY AND AFTER-EFFECTS OF 1968.

7. SECOND, AS TO THE STATE OF THE COUNTRY. ALL OF THE AVAILABLE SIGNS POINT TO A REGIME IN FULL CONTROL OF THE SITUATION, AND WE SEE NO EVIDENCES OF UNEASE AS A RESULT OF HUSAK'S CURRENT CAMPAIGN. THE PEOPLE, MOST OBSERVERS FEEL, ARE TOO BEATEN DOWN TO GET AROUSED NOW OVER DUBCEK, ALTHOUGH A CERTAIN CURIOSITY HAS BEEN AROUSED AMONG THE MAJORITY

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 PRAGUE 00900 230801Z

WHO WERE UNAWARE -- UNTIL HUSAK'S ATTACK -- OF THE LETTER. OF COURSE, MANY PEOPLE ARE WORRIED ABOUT A POTENTIAL HARDENING OF THE LINE THAT WILL AFFECT EVERYONE IN SOME MEASURE, THE MEN OF 1968 AND THE INTELLECTUALS FIRST, BUT EVERYONE TO SOME DEGREE. MOST PEOPLE SEEM TO FEEL THAT SUCH A TIGHTENING IS LIKELY.

8. FINALLY, AS TO HUSAK'S LEADERSHIP. SOME OF OUR CONTACTS (NOTABLY TOIVOLA, THE FINNISH AMBASSADOR) FEEL THAT HUSAK HAS SUFFERED A BIG SLIP AND IS NOT IN GOOD SHAPE. MOST OF US THINK IT IS TOO EARLY TO CONCLUDE THAT. FOR THE MOMENT, HUSAK IS DEFINITELY IN CHARGE, AND THE ORCHESTRATION OF THE ANTI-DUBCEK CAMPAIGN UNDER HIS LEADERSHIP SHOWS THIS. NO DOUBT THE COMING WEEKS WILL TELL US MORE. LOOKING AHEAD, IT WOULD SEEM THAT AT THE LEAST, HUSAK HAS SUFFERED SERIOUS HARM

TO THE STATESMANLIKE IMAGE HE WAS TRYING TO BUILD. HIS  
SPEECH OF APRIL 16 (AT LEAST THE DUBCEK PROTION) WAS APPAR-  
ENTLY AD-LIB, NOT WRITTEN OUT, AND HIS VITUPEROUSNESS WAS  
NOTABLE. EVEN IF HE RETAINS CONTROL, HE HAS DONE HIMSELF  
DAMAGE AS A WOULD-BE SYMBOL OF CZECHOSLOVAK NORMALIZATION  
AFTER 1968.  
PERRY

NOTE BY OC/T: #AS RECEIVED.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** HARASSMENT, POLITICAL LEADERS, SPEECHES, POLITICAL SITUATION, PARTY FACTIONS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 22 APR 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** GolinoFR  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1975PRAGUE00900  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D750142-0356  
**From:** PRAGUE  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1975/newtext/t19750428/aaaabaiy.tel  
**Line Count:** 178  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 4  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 75 PRAGUE 855  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** GolinoFR  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 09 APR 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <09 APR 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <14 APR 2003 by GolinoFR>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
05 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** KSC CONTINUES ATTACKS AGAINST DUBCEK  
**TAGS:** PINT, CZ, (HUSAK, GUSTAV), (DUBCEK, ALEXANDER)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006